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Piedad F. Robertson, Secretary of Education
One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

FEB 16 1994

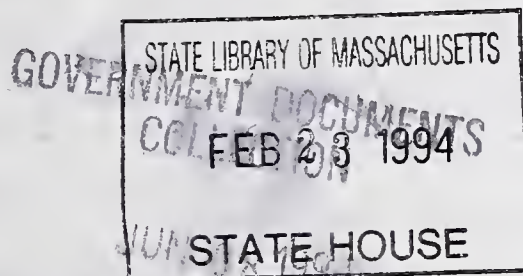
EXECUTIVE OFFICE
February 14 1994
OF EDUCATION

Dear Dr. Robertson:

Please find enclosed the Charter School application I'm submitting for the proposed Central Secondary School* in Boston. I'm submitting this application for your review, with the intention of opening the school in September, 1995. Though the application is not complete (as was permissible for September, 1995 applicants), and though I (and others who have worked with me) have only begun to do major infrastructure work (e.g. start-up funding, a facility), I wanted to submit this to commence the application process, and to receive any early feedback and support that might be forthcoming to applicants. I intend to re-submit a complete application after a building and more substantial start-up funds have been secured.

This application is the product of many discussions and meetings with teachers, educators, and representatives of community institutions I've worked with, though I'm submitting now under my signature alone (all additional signators will be added to the application by April 30, 1994). To date, Ted Sizer, Chairman of the Coalition of Essential Schools and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, and Midian Kurland, Project Director, Apple Computers, have agreed to serve as trustees, and to support our work in any way possible. Additional trustees, institutional partners, and funders will also be identified by April 30, 1994.

Though the application is still in its infancy, I'd greatly appreciate any feedback you can give, and any additional support that might be available from your office. I look forward to hearing from you soon.



University of Massachusetts
Depository Copy

Sincerely,

Sidney W. Smith
15 Mendum St.
Roslindale, MA, 02131

* The actual name of the school will be determined once a site has been identified.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Education

Charter School Application Designated Contact Person

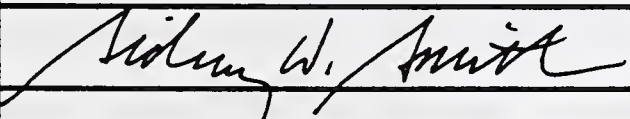
Please provide the Executive Office of Education with the following information identifying a designated contact person for the group submitting an application for charter school status. This form *must* be filed along with the charter school application no later than February 15, 1994. Please mail all required materials to:

Secretary of Education
ATTN: Charter Schools
Executive Office of Education
One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Tel: (617) 727-1313

Please print or type:

The Central Secondary School Planning Team
Name of organization/group filing for charter school status

Contact Person Name:	Sidney W. Smith
Signature:	 Date: 2 / 14 / 1994
Title:	Project Director, ATLAS Communities Project
Address:	15 Mendum St.
City:	Roslindale
State:	Massachusetts
Zip:	02131
Telephone:	617-469-0916 (h); 617-969-7100 x2470 (w)
Fax:	617-969-3440

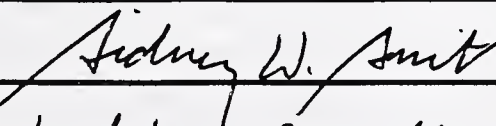
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Education

Charter School Application

I/We, the undersigned charter school applicant(s), do hereby certify that the information provided herein and filed with the Executive Office of Education on this the 14th day of February (month) of the year 1994, is to the best of my/our knowledge, truthful and accurate.

(This signature sheet *must* be attached to the application when it is filed.)

Name: <u>Sidney W. Smith</u>	Signature: <u></u>	Date: <u>2/14/94</u>
Address: <u>15 Mendon St.</u>	City: <u>Roslindale</u>	State: <u>MA</u>
		Zip: <u>02131</u>
		Tel: <u>617-469-0916</u>

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If more space is required, please attach additional sheets.

Executive Office of Education, One Ashburton Place, Room 1401, Boston, MA, 02108

THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON FROM 1630 TO 1800

Year	Event	Location
1630	Founding of Boston	North End
1634	First church established	North End
1638	First school established	North End
1640	First public house established	North End
1642	First fire engine established	North End
1644	First hospital established	North End
1646	First library established	North End
1648	First newspaper established	North End
1650	First printing press established	North End
1652	First shipyard established	North End
1654	First dock established	North End
1656	First wharf established	North End
1658	First bridge established	North End
1660	First fort established	North End
1662	First prison established	North End
1664	First court established	North End
1666	First town meeting established	North End
1668	First school established	North End
1670	First church established	North End
1672	First fire engine established	North End
1674	First hospital established	North End
1676	First library established	North End
1678	First newspaper established	North End
1680	First printing press established	North End
1682	First shipyard established	North End
1684	First dock established	North End
1686	First wharf established	North End
1688	First bridge established	North End
1690	First fort established	North End
1692	First prison established	North End
1694	First court established	North End
1696	First town meeting established	North End
1698	First school established	North End
1700	First church established	North End
1702	First fire engine established	North End
1704	First hospital established	North End
1706	First library established	North End
1708	First newspaper established	North End
1710	First printing press established	North End
1712	First shipyard established	North End
1714	First dock established	North End
1716	First wharf established	North End
1718	First bridge established	North End
1720	First fort established	North End
1722	First prison established	North End
1724	First court established	North End
1726	First town meeting established	North End
1728	First school established	North End
1730	First church established	North End
1732	First fire engine established	North End
1734	First hospital established	North End
1736	First library established	North End
1738	First newspaper established	North End
1740	First printing press established	North End
1742	First shipyard established	North End
1744	First dock established	North End
1746	First wharf established	North End
1748	First bridge established	North End
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1782	First prison established	North End
1784	First court established	North End
1786	First town meeting established	North End
1788	First school established	North End
1790	First church established	North End
1792	First fire engine established	North End
1794	First hospital established	North End
1796	First library established	North End
1798	First newspaper established	North End
1800	First printing press established	North End

Charter Application: Part I

CENTRAL SECONDARY SCHOOL:

Introduction (The Model U.N.): It's eight o'clock on a bright Monday morning in January, and thirty-six students are working with two teachers, reviewing and evaluating their work of the past few days, and planning their work for the days to come. Angela starts the morning session by presenting her summary and critique of the President's recent press conference detailing the United States' position on Serbia's "ethnic cleansing" program. When she finishes, Mr. Johnson asks Angela and other students to assess the strong and weak points of her presentation, and Marvin writes these on the board. The rest of the students (who have watched a videotape of the press conference and read Angela's paper) present her with their assessments, identifying the strong points of her presentation, asking clarifying questions, presenting challenges to her position, and providing a variety of additional suggestions. Nicki serves as a facilitator, ensuring that each student gets an opportunity to engage in the exchange. When Andre mentions that he hasn't read the material, Nicki gets on his case, reminding him (and the other students) of their responsibility to one another, as members of their delegation.

Angela's followed by Hector, who's just completed his display on the evolving political geography of Eastern Europe, Hector presents his display to the group, runs through his oral presentation (which he'll also present as an exhibition to a group of geography majors from Boston University in a couple of weeks), and works with other students to assess the strengths and weaknesses of his presentation. As they help Hector through his presentation, Mr. Johnson reminds the students that they're responsible for everything Hector's presenting and will need this information for the first meeting of the Security Council, as well as the exam that will follow the conclusion of the investigation.

Ms. Jenkins presses Mark, Debbie, and Yusef for details about the presentation they're scheduled to make on Friday regarding the parallels between "ethnic cleansing", the Holocaust, and slavery in America. After pushing them a bit, she schedules a quick meeting with them right after class to make sure they're on track for Friday. All the students are reminded about the afternoon presentation on the history of genocide being conducted by staff from Facing History and Ourselves, in the auditorium. Mr. Johnson makes a point to thank Brenda, Carmen, and Freddie for arranging the presentation, and for sending the invitations to the other schools that are going to participate in the event. He also reminds everyone that there will be a follow-up seminar for Central students immediately following the presentation. He closes by reviewing the list of readings everyone's responsible for, in preparation for the presentation and seminar. Each of the readings is on the network, though each student is also responsible for identifying and bringing in one additional reading they've found through the network's link to the Harvard, Boston University, and Copley Square libraries. Students are expected to hand in their prep sheets, and these additional readings, at the conclusion of the seminar session.

Each of the students gives a brief summary of the work they're pursuing that day, Mr. Johnson reviews the schedule for the week, Ms. Jenkins reminds the students to bring in their

permission slips for the retreat they're participating in at the Global Education Center, in February, and the group breaks, to reconvene after lunch.

All of the work mentioned above is indicative of the kinds of activities that will be conducted at the Central Secondary School, a unique school planned for secondary school age students in Boston.

1.-3. Mission Statement/School Objectives/Statement of Need:

Purpose: Central Secondary School will provide students with a unique, rigorous learning experience that can serve as a high-quality alternative to more traditional secondary school programs. The school is designed to attract students who are active learners, who like to pose and pursue problems and difficult questions (and maybe make some noise while doing so), and who seek an alternative to the normal confines and rigors of secondary schools that emphasize a lecture-driven, teacher-centered approach to instruction.

The school is also designed to focus intensely on the development of sophisticated skills of inquiry and expression, and to develop in students deep understandings of important themes, topics, concepts, and problems. The school is not designed to cover overly-extensive amounts of content at the expense of developing these skills and deep understandings. All teachers will be expected to be teachers of writing, and analytical reading, and research, and speaking, and critical thinking, and (in many cases) quantitative reasoning. As such, all teachers will be expected to be good writers, thoughtful readers, good researchers, good speakers, and critical thinkers, as well as being highly-skilled in some particular field(s) of inquiry and study. Likewise, all graduates of Central Secondary School will have sophisticated skills in the areas mentioned above, or they will not be allowed to graduate. Graduation will be competency-based, with students required to demonstrate these skills applied to a variety of areas of work and study.

Finally, the school is designed to be a community of learners, and an emphasis will be placed on developing strong student-teacher-parent relationships that step beyond those often found in secondary schools. Though the school has extremely high expectations of its students, and expects all students to live up to these expectations as a condition of graduation, it will be, first and foremost, a supportive platform for each and every one of its students. The school will remain deliberately small in order to ensure that members of the school community know one another well, and support one another to the fullest.

The core of the school will be a set of powerful in and out-of-school learning experiences students aren't likely to forget: experiences that are engaging, challenging, mindful of students' interests, and designed to have an enduring impact on students' ability to negotiate life after high school.

Mission: The central mission of the school will be to develop inquisitive, well-rounded, confident individuals

- who can use their minds well,
- who can relate to and work with any variety of people,
- who are responsible and active citizens
 - who can define and defend their values and beliefs,
 - who have deep understandings of major topics, concepts, and problems of importance to their local and global community and,
- who are well-prepared to manage the ever-changing challenges of the world-of-work.

Beliefs: The central belief of the school will be that all children can be and do anything they're willing to work for when they're made to feel important, when they're expected to do well, when they're engaged in challenging and meaningful work, and when they're supported by a unified community of teachers, parents, and other concerned and involved adults.

Together, the school's mission and beliefs will inform and drive all of the policies, practices and decisions of the school. Given this, hard work, respect, high expectations, personal responsibility, and a commitment to service as well as personal achievement will be expected from all members of the school community.

4/6. School Demographics/Admissions Policy:

Central Secondary School will be an urban, public school with 350 students of diverse backgrounds, grades 6-12 (50 students per grade), from throughout the city of Boston. We hope to find a downtown location for the school, or one that's easily accessible to public transportation. We hope to find such a site for two reasons:

- a. We expect to make extensive use of resources available throughout the city, as part of the instructional program.
- b. We hope to be located on "neutral turf" so that students from any neighborhood in the city can feel safe traveling to and from school.

The school will consciously strive to serve families who are looking for options to existing public schools, and who cannot otherwise afford options outside the public sector. The school hopes to be able to control its admissions process to ensure that a significant majority of its clients come from families that fit this profile. It also hopes to control its admissions to ensure that the ratio of the school's minority:majority population is no less (and possibly much higher than) the ratio of minority:majority school-age children living in the city of Boston.

We would not like the school to become an exclusive refuge for former private school children whose parents are looking for a cheaper option to the public schools. Though some of this can be controlled through an aggressive recruitment process, it is naive to believe that private school students won't have a significant admissions advantage over less-sophisticated public school students who may not have a parent to advocate for

him/her. We only hope to be able to exert sufficient control over the admissions process to ensure diversity in our student population.

5. Recruiting and Marketing Plan:

Students will be recruited, in part, through the regular print and electronic media (including neighborhood newspapers, the Bay State Banner, Boston Chinese News, and El Mundo), through the Black Educators Alliance of Massachusetts, through citywide and neighborhood social and health service agencies, through the community schools network, local recreation centers, through community councils in each of Boston's public housing developments, and through personal referrals from service agencies and youth workers.

7. Profile of Founding Coalition:

This application is the product of a number of discussions and meetings with teachers, educators, and representatives of community institutions. A number of additional meetings have been scheduled between now and April 30, 1994, at which point additional signators will be added to the proposal. The application is also the product of ten year's work with the Coalition of Essential Schools, and Ted Sizer, Chairman of the Coalition and the recently-endowed Annenberg Institute for School Reform.

To date, Ted Sizer and Midian Kurland, Project Director, Apple Computers, have agreed to serve as trustees, and to support this effort in any way possible. Additional trustees, institutional partners, and funding agents will also be identified by April 30, 1994.

8. Timetable:

The following dates are important to the development of the school and its initiation by September 1, 1995.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| • February 15, 1994 | Initial (draft) proposal for Central Secondary School submitted to Secretary of Education |
| • April 30, 1994 | Institutional partners/Board of Trustees identified |
| • June 1, 1994 | Facility identified
Teacher applications generated and distributed |
| • August 1, 1994 | Teachers identified
Start-up funding secured |
| • August, 1994 | Initial professional/program/curriculum development activities for new teachers |
| • Aug., '94 - Aug., '95 | Ongoing professional/program/curriculum development activities |

Start-up activities continue (facility, business plan/procedures, library, science labs, computers, personnel procedures, contracts, "soft-money" proposal development et al.)

- September 30, 1994 Brochures and applications for new students distributed
- March 1, 1995 New students identified
- Summer, 1995 Orientation/retreat: new students, parents, and staff
Home visits: staff and all new students
Final preparations for school opening
- September 1, 1995 Central Secondary School opens to 100 6th/7th grade students and 100 9th/10th grade students

Charter Application: Part II

9. Evidence of Support:

To be submitted by April 30, 1994.

10/11. Educational Program/Student Performance:

Human Behavior (a vignette): *The students in the class couldn't believe what they'd read the night before and heard in Dr. Sanger's presentation just moments ago. Significantly and legally alter human behavior with a common prescription drug? Replace tension and anxiety with calm confidence? Overcome painful shyness with a pill? Increase your memory by increasing your norepinephrine? What is this norepinephrine anyway.....and this serotonin, and the amygdala, and these synapses and neurons?*

Ms. Crawford clearly knows she's managed to construct one of those powerful "teachable moments", and she's prepared to take advantage of it. Over the course of the next eighteen weeks, her students will explore, among other topics, the biochemical basis of behavior, genetics, the powerful impact of heredity and environment, the fields of behavioral and cognitive psychology, and the ethics of drug therapy and genetic engineering. They'll go on a number of trips to Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School for seminars, and over twenty guest presenters are scheduled to visit their class. By the close of the class the students will have a deeper understanding of a number of essential questions, including:

- *Who and what are we?*
- *Where did we come from?*
- *Why do we behave as we do?*
- *How does heredity and environment make us who we are?*
- *Given who and what we are, what is our purpose.....our destiny?*
- *What distinguishes us from other life forms?*

In addition to this, they'll propose solutions and build exhibitions around questions like the following:

- *What roles can and should we play to alter hereditary and environmental conditions?*
- *How should we solve problems of violence?*
- *What should we do, if anything, about the preponderance of violence in the media?*

Ms. Crawford has always felt that these kinds of questions provided kids with the right entry points into biology, chemistry, psychology, sociology, politics, and life in general. She's looking forward to her students' responses in the months to come.

Three words sum up the focus of the school's curriculum: inquiry, expression, and application. The central goal of the school's curriculum will be three-fold:

- *to teach students how to access and critically evaluate information, in the process of grappling with thought-provoking and sometimes controversial*

topics, concepts, and questions, and in the process of solving challenging problems,

- to communicate their findings and new understandings orally, in writing, quantitatively, and aesthetically, and
- to apply their findings and new understandings in productive and purposeful ways.

Courses in the school may explore a single discipline, and the various questions and problems embedded in this discipline, or they may focus on particular questions or problems through an interdisciplinary approach. Students will be required to earn a balance of credits distributed across the following areas: Language & Literature; Mathematics, Science & Technology; History & Social Studies; and the Arts & Athletics. Individual courses will be designed by teachers in line with the school's mission and in response to curriculum requirements.

The curriculum, and the school as a whole, will be distinguished by a number of elements, including the following:

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment: Courses at Central will focus on making students active learners who do more than "receive" knowledge from teachers. Students will be taught how to gather and make meaning of facts, figures, and other information; how to explain the relationship between ideas and events; how to develop arguments; how to find their own answers to tough problems and questions, built on the understandings of others; and how to apply what they have learned to new situations. Students will also be taught how to use their skills and knowledge in meaningful ways: to share their skills and knowledge to inform, change, and move others to action. In short, students will be taught how to go beyond learning about politics, or science, or business, or art (for example); they'll be taught how to be budding politicians, scientists, businesspeople, and artists. They'll be taught how to be learners, workers, responsible citizens, and caring members of society.

1. The Common Core of Skills and Attributes: All scientists, historians, citizens, and workers in our "information society" need to be able to employ a set of skills that cross the disciplines and all fields of work. Good scientists, historians, citizens, and workers also display a set of common attributes that are keys to their success. At Central Secondary School, these skills and attributes will be central to the learning process. All courses within the school will be designed to develop students' analytical reading, research, critical and creative thinking, expository writing, speaking, listening, and quantitative skills. The development of these skills will be sequenced across all grades and courses. All teachers will share the responsibility to teach these skills in the context of their work, and all students will have to demonstrate these skills to a prescribed level of competence, as a condition of graduation, and as a condition of successfully completing any course.

All courses and learning activities will also be designed to promote and develop the attributes that are essential to students' success in and beyond the school experience. Students will complete products that require them to be persistent,

attentive to detail, inquisitive, creative, organized, self-initiating and directed, reflective, and responsible. Students will be taught to view ideas and problems from a variety of perspectives, and to work well in groups (to organize work, to give and receive constructive criticism, to be fair in their treatment of others and in resolving concerns, to be respectful of individual differences and the rights and interests of others...).

2. Developing Deep Understandings of "Big Ideas": All courses and learning activities will focus on developing deep understandings of big ideas:
 - generative themes, topics, concepts, and problems of central importance to life and work outside of school, to the various disciplines, and to students and teachers alike. The exploration of these ideas will necessarily lead to the investigation of key events, people, discoveries, theories, principles, and works of literature and art.
3. Essential Questions: In an effort to motivate and guide students' investigation of these themes, topics, concepts, and problems, teachers will concentrate on asking (and teaching students how to formulate and answer) the kind of open-ended, thought-provoking, and often controversial "essential" questions that will stimulate critical and creative thought. These are questions that go to the heart of people's concerns and often cut across the disciplines. They're thought-provoking, often controversial, and most-often have no single right answer. As often as possible, they serve as a call for action as well as understanding (e.g. "What are the problems of our health care system and how should we go about solving them?"). They must be examined from a variety of perspectives to be answered well. Their investigation requires thoughtful research and leads to the development of a substantial knowledge-base. Whether discipline-based or interdisciplinary, students will use essential questions to probe deeply and persistently into themes, topics, concepts, and problems that matter to them and the community.
(Examples: Course: The American Experience; Big Idea: Perspectives; Essential Questions: How has race, class, gender, and ethnicity made a difference, and how can we solve problems of prejudice and discrimination?, How have we done as 'one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all', and how can we come closer to reaching this ideal?, Who's right: Booker T. Washington and/or W.E.B. DuBois?);
Course: Human Behavior; Big Idea: Heredity and Environment; Essential Questions: Why do we behave as we do?, What roles can and should we play to alter hereditary and environmental conditions?, How might we solve our problems of violence?)

Essential questions will serve as key points of departure for units, courses, and other learning activities. They'll give important context to the work students are engaged in. They'll often tie content together from the beginning to the end of a unit or course. They'll help to organize the collection and analysis of information, and the development of appropriate learning activities. They'll require students to conduct research; to read, observe, analyze, and draw conclusions about often conflicting bits of information, from a variety of perspectives; to propose solutions, where applicable;

and to report and act on their findings. Their investigation will require students to develop and apply skills and habits that are central to the curriculum, and to develop deep understandings.

4. **Investigations:** Courses at Central will serve as investigations. Investigations will include large group, team, and independent study. They'll include the data-gathering experiences and subsequent discussions that allow students to build a knowledge-base and reach deeper understandings of big ideas and essential questions. They'll also include the activities that are necessary to teach students how to develop and communicate these understandings effectively.

Investigations will often be community as well as school-based. They'll typically include library research, the analysis of case studies or simulations, field-work, seminars, observations, experiments, and site visits.

In some cases, investigations will include extensive site-based work in community institutions. For example, Central students will be involved in intensive in and out-of-school investigations in the areas of government, business, health and human service, the environment, arts & communication, and post-graduate education. Each of these investigations will be designed to expose students to a sector of the business/service/educational community, to develop in them a deeper understanding of a particular institution in each sector, to help them become familiar with the working lives and expectations of workers in the institutions they're investigating, and to engage them in identifying and tackling a problem that's of importance to the institution. In many cases, students will follow-up these investigations with more intensive internships as part of their Senior Exhibition (see below).

City Hall: Jacqui is one of eighteen students who have just finished the first segment of their orientation session at City Hall as the first piece of their four-week Government Investigation. Ms. Flaherty, the site facilitator, has briefed the students on everything, including the activity schedule, proper dress and behavior, a floor plan of city hall (including the cafeteria and each of the meeting rooms they'll work in), the names of each student's mentor (whom they'll soon meet), and a brief overview of the seminars, presentations, meetings, shadowing experiences, and activities and classes they'll be involved in. The students have about ten minutes to go to the bathroom and return for the second part of their orientation. This session will include a presentation and discussion of some essential questions that will be tackled during the investigation, and some products all of the students will be expected to produce. A tour of the building will follow this session, after which the students will return to the same conference room to meet their mentors for introductions, a team building activity, and lunch.

Over the course of the next two weeks, the students will be involved in meetings with representatives of a number of interest groups involved in promoting or defeating a particular motion that faces the city council. Students will also shadow different government officials and staff members through a day's activities (including officials in the school, fire, public works, and police departments) and report back to other students, summarizing their activities and their interviews of these people. Seminars and classes will also be conducted by various government officials, staffers, and representatives of various interest groups. The seminars and classes will include presentations and discussions about the structure of city government, procedures for

introducing and passing a bill, tales of political intrigue, and Robert Penn Warren's All the King's Men. Daily seminars will be held on a variety of topics of concern in the city, and the students must read and complete a summary/critique of a number of articles and other readings each day.

Each day will start and conclude with team time, during which activities will be reviewed, readings and the essential questions will be discussed, meetings will be prepped for, problems will be resolved, and plans will be made for the day(s) to come. Students will work particularly closely with their mentors and Ms. Flaherty, frequently touching base to get any assistance or direction they might need.

Given her experience with the Business Investigation she completed last term at the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Co., and the Health and Human Service Investigation at Brigham and Women's Hospital last year, Jacqui knows the next two weeks will be packed with activity, and she just hopes she can keep her head above water. She runs downstairs, grabs a tonic, and turns to hurry back for Ms. Flaherty's next presentation.

5. Exhibitions and Portfolios: As noted earlier, each course will be designed to move students to action, to engage them in some activity that translates their skills and understandings into purposeful work. It's not enough to be able to think and write well; it's not enough to understand complex, contemporary issues; it's not enough to be able to propose solutions to problems and concerns....you need to do something with these skills, understandings, and solutions. Consequently, Central students will be routinely engaged in real-world work (e.g. talking to or writing legislators and other policymakers; creating a school newspaper or literary magazine; writing letters to the editors of newspapers or magazines; performing observations and experiments; conducting community surveys; creating one-act plays, monologues, murals, or art exhibits; corresponding with authors or students in other sites through electronic networks; conducting seminars for other students; completing community service projects).

In all cases, these exhibitions will be designed to be shared with other students, parents, community members, policymakers, or experts in the field. They'll be designed to be action statements that allow students to demonstrate they:

- have developed a set of essential skills and habits (and most particularly, the skills of inquiry and expression),
- have developed deep understandings of a theme, topic, concept, and/or problem of central importance to life and work outside of school (and to courses inside of school),
- can propose thoughtful solutions to important problems, and
- can present these skills, habits, understandings, and solutions to peers (and other important community members) in meaningful ways.

Exhibitions will also serve other purposes. They will:

- provide focus and points of departure for curriculum, instruction, ongoing assessment, and professional development activities,
- make the school externally accountable by providing members of the school community with an opportunity to view and assess their childrens' work,
- make the school internally accountable by generating valuable information about what and how students are learning,
- translate expectations into examples of real student work.

Central to the school's exhibition program will be the Position Paper and Oral Defense. All courses will be designed, in part, to assist students in presenting and defending their perspectives on big ideas and essential questions orally and in writing. Students will be required to write and defend position papers on a regular basis for each of their courses.

In addition to the above, students will keep all of their exhibitions on file in a portfolio that will move with them from course to course and year to year, and that will be available for review by all members of the school community. These portfolios will be testaments to students' ongoing growth, indicators of strengths and needs (as part of an ongoing diagnostic-prescriptive process), as well as assessments of performance for teachers and the school as a whole, as well as students.

6. Co-Curricular Activities: Activities that may be considered extracurricular in other schools will be of critical importance to the curriculum at Central. School newspapers, drama clubs, debate teams, mock trial teams, Model United Nations, school stores, outing clubs, community service clubs, and athletic competitions (for example) provide powerful learning experiences for students. Many courses in the school will be organized entirely around activities of this sort. However, unlike some extracurricular activities in other schools, these activities (including school sports) will also be designed as important vehicles for the development of each of the skills and attributes embedded in the Common Core, and the knowledge and understandings of big ideas and essential questions.
7. The Major Area of Study/the Senior Exhibition: During a students' last two years in the school (s)/he will pick a major area of study (s)/he'd like to focus a significant amount of attention on. This major could include the study of a traditional academic discipline (e.g. Biology, History, Art); the study of a particular issue or phenomena from a particular discipline; the study of a significant institution (e.g. Health Care Institutions, the Courts, the Media, Business); the interdisciplinary study of a particular topic, theme, concept, or problem; or some other creative venture designed by a student and his/her advisor. During the last two years, each student will craft a personalized set of courses and activities best designed to help him/her explore his/her major area of study. These courses and activities could consume 50% or more of a student's time during his/her final two years in the school. This two year investigation will be concluded by a major, multi-media, senior exhibition. The exhibition will include:

- a. a fully documented, twenty page research/position paper . The paper will...
 - i. demonstrate the student's thorough knowledge and deep understanding of the area of study (s)he has chosen,
 - ii. present a solid defense of a position on a thought-provoking question or problem related to the area of study, and
 - iii. propose and defend an answer/solution to the question/problem, supported by data, and/or
 - iv. propose and defend (with data) modifications to an existing condition, institution, law, policy or practice that would improve people's lives.
- b. a presentation and oral defense of the research/position paper, conducted in class. Adults from collaborating agencies or institutions, who are personally or professionally engaged in work concerning each student's chosen topic, will be recruited to participate in and evaluate the presentation/defense,
- c. a visual presentation supporting the oral presentation, using any medium and tools of choice, and
- d. a quantitative analysis or representation of some aspect of the question or problem being considered.

8. School Day & Year: The school will operate programs from September through July, though the regular academic year will conclude in June. The school will follow the same academic calendar as local public schools, though optional academic, enrichment, work, and travel activities will be run by the school through July.

Regular school hours will be 8:00AM - 3:00PM for students, and 7:45 AM - 4:00PM for staff. Staff will be available to meet with students, and for scheduled staff meetings, from 3:00 - 4:00. Staff will meet regularly to debrief the week's work, to discuss students' work, to discuss particular student's health and service needs and to plan interventions, to discuss school-wide issues of climate and morale, and for social or team-building purposes. Two full days per month will also be set aside for staff development purposes.

A tutoring/homework center, staffed by local college work-study students, will operate each afternoon, from 3:00 - 4:00. In some cases, students may be required to attend afternoon sessions. Additional college students will work in the school on a daily basis as teacher's aides in classrooms.

9. The School Schedule: Because the school believes that no teacher can effectively work with students (s)he doesn't know well, the student:teacher ratio will be kept at or below 75:1. Because many of the activities that are important to the instructional process cannot be completed in 45 minute snippets of time, "average" class time will be approximately 90 minutes (though many classes/ learning activities will run considerably longer each day).

The school will be organized into nine week terms during which any student may be engaged in as few as one course/internship/community learning experience to as many as four (90 minute) courses (plus advisory). Teachers, in turn, may be responsible for as few as a single course/internship/community learning experience (typically enrolling approximately 18-20 students) or as many as three (90 minute) courses (typically enrolling no more than 25 students each), plus an advisory. Advisories/

assemblies will be conducted on a daily basis, with all students and staff members involved.

Students will earn credit for their work at the close of each nine week term.

12. School Evaluation:

As stated above, exhibitions will serve as an important vehicle to assess school and staff performance. Exhibitions make the school externally accountable by providing members of the school community with an opportunity to view and assess their childrens' work. Exhibitions make the school internally accountable by generating valuable information about what and how students are learning.

In addition to this, the school will use results from state-mandated assessments, college admissions statistics, SAT scores, and its own self-assessment, administered to staff, students, and parents, as important indicators of success.

Advisories will be developed to attend to various social, academic, and personal needs of students, to allow students to serve as participants in the overall management and governance of the school, and to build an especially strong relationship between the school (and most particularly, a staff member), the student, and his/her family.

Advisors will be the key support people who help students map-out their ongoing and post-grad academic plans. Students will be assigned a staff advisor when they enter the school, and stay with this advisor throughout their years in the school (unless a change is made by mutual consent). Advisors will serve as the key link between students, the school, and parents. To the greatest possible extent, it's hoped that advisors will develop the types of relationships that allow them to serve as extended family members. Finally, advisors will also link with mentors from collaborating institutions to extend the "family" and involve students with an increasing number of significant other adults.

In addition to this, the school will link with parents and the community through its Planning and Management team (see School Governance below). The school will also run, in part, as a cooperative enterprise. Staff and students (and in some cases parents and partners) will share responsibility for many aspects of the daily operation and upkeep of the school. School service days, during which all members of the school community will work on beautifying the school, or contribute to the school in some other capacity, will be regularly scheduled.

The community outside the school will also serve as a base for frequent school investigations and internships. Community members will frequently be called upon to bring their ideas and expertise to classes and other learning activities.

Finally, the school will also be devoted to community service, with parts of, or the entire school, frequently engaged in community service activities, including substantial, all-school ventures before each holiday season. Examples of these activities will include Thanksgiving service activities in support of the homeless or children who are

orphaned or abandoned, and participation in the annual events sponsored by City Year, Oxfam, the Jane Doe Foundation, and other service organizations.

All of the student-parent-community affairs work will be managed by a full-time teacher-administrator.

13. Human Resource Information:

Many of the initial teaching and administrative staff will come from the planning group now involved in constructing the charter proposal. Additional staff members will be recruited from local public and private schools, local teacher preparation programs, and from the Boston Public Schools in particular, and selected by the planning group. It should be noted that the school is designed, in part, to provide veteran Boston Public School teachers with an option that has been previously unavailable to them, to reward good teachers for their commitment and diligence, and to provide them with an opportunity to teach and work with colleagues with a similar vision of what good schooling can be all about.

Teachers with proper certification and/or teaching experience will be given first preference. All teachers applicants will be required to submit an application, at least three recommendations from other teachers or professional colleagues in schools, copies of any performance evaluations, and a portfolio including samples of their students' work. Videos of past teaching experiences will be requested, if available. Applicants will also be required to participate in an extensive interview with the planning team and teach one or more classes as part of the application process.

It is anticipated that the staff will include seventeen full-time teachers, three administrator-teachers, and one secretary when the enrollment reaches 350 students. In addition to this, it's expected that many college work-study students will be employed as part-time teacher aides. The school may employ a custodian or contract out for custodial and maintenance services. The school expects to contract health services through a local health clinic, to be identified when the school facility has been located. All staff will be paid using the same pay scale employed by the Boston Public Schools. Staff will receive benefits comparable to those provided to employees of the Boston Public Schools.

All staff will be evaluated on an bi-annual basis. Teachers and administrators other than the principal will be evaluated by the principal of the school. Input will be received from students and parents, through a systematic process, as part of the overall teacher evaluation process. Students' progress, as measured by agreed upon indicators of success (e.g. exhibitions, selected standardized tests), will be central to the performance evaluation process of both teachers and administrators.

All staff are hired on two-year contracts. Any staff member may be dismissed by the principal at the conclusion of a contract, given an unsatisfactory performance evaluation. Dismissals during the term of a contract are permissible when an

unsatisfactory performance evaluation has been given following a documented diagnostic-prescriptive process involving the teacher and the principal.

The principal will be evaluated by the Board of Trustees, in collaboration with the school's Planning and Management Team (see School Governance below). Input will be received from teachers, students, and parents, through a systematic process, as part of the principal's performance evaluation process. The principal is also hired on a two-year contract, and may be dismissed at the close of any contract period, given an unsatisfactory performance evaluation. Dismissal during the term of a contract is permissible when an unsatisfactory performance evaluation has been given following a documented diagnostic-prescriptive process involving the principal and the Board of Trustees.

14. School Governance:

Staff, parents, and students (and in some instances, representatives of agencies, businesses, colleges and other institutions collaborating with the school) will work together to make decisions about all aspects of the school, to select the school's staff, to evaluate school progress, and to share responsibility for the well-being of the school. This collaborative process will be conducted through the school's Planning and Management Team.

The school will be guided by the belief that teachers must have optimal authority over decisions about what goes on in their classes. Though these decisions will be guided by the school's principles and accountability measures, these principles and measures will facilitate and guide good curriculum and instruction rather than constrict it.

One key to making all of this work will be the maintenance of a deliberately small school community where decisions about curriculum and instruction (and all decisions of importance) can be made through discussions that involve key stakeholders to the fullest. Consequently, the school's Planning and Management Team process will be open to all staff members, parents and students.

15. Building Options:

At present a building has not been identified. We expect to meet with city officials in the near future to determine if any appropriate sites may be available for occupation. We will also meet with local colleges and major businesses and service institutions to discuss the possibility of locating the school in one of them, to be run as a collaborative venture. We hope to identify a site by June 1, 1994.

Charter Application: Part III

16. Code of Conduct:

All members of the school community will be governed by a collaboratively developed and annually reviewed Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, which will also include the due process guidelines for the school. This Bill will be developed by staff, students, and parents in the summer of 1995, prior to the opening of the school.

The Bill will fervently uphold every student's right to an uninterrupted education, every student's and staff member's right to respect, and every student's and staff member's responsibility to protect the well-being of all members of the school community. The school will also be committed to a mediation/problem-solving process that's directed at identifying problems as they emerge, and resolving them in a structured, reasonable, and timely fashion. This process will be taught to all members of the school community through the advisory program. All individuals will be expected to employ this process. Student and teacher mediators will be available to provide support, when required.

The principal will have the ultimate authority to administer the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, though concerns will be referred to him/her only when they cannot be resolved by individuals and/or mediators through the mediation/problem-solving process. A Community Health Team, consisting of students, teachers, and parents will meet regularly to discuss issues of concern, and to make recommendations to the Planning and Management Team. This team will also monitor school climate, develop and coordinate activities that will promote and develop a strong sense of community, and conduct the annual review of the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities.

17. Special Needs Students:

The school is committed to serving any student regardless of developmental needs or special challenges, and encourages these students to apply. Students will be integrated to the greatest extent possible, with special education teachers serving as members of teacher teams. Given the nature of instruction, with limited time devoted to whole-group activities, we feel the school is uniquely able to respond to the varying needs of special education students. Additional resource room instruction will be available to support students' skill development, particularly in the areas of reading, writing, math, and study skills.

All students will be responsible for developing the common core of skills and attributes, and for applying these skills and attributes to the demonstration of deep understandings of a substantial range of topics, themes, concepts, and problems across the disciplines, through exhibitions, to the prescribed performance levels required of graduates. Exceptions will be made only for students who cannot demonstrate understandings through a particular medium, because of some handicapping condition. These students may exhibit their understandings through alternative media.

Students who cannot demonstrate deep understandings through any medium, because of severely handicapping conditions, will be presented with a certificate of completion, detailing their academic program and achievements, to be supplemented by their portfolio of performances. Special attention will be given to transitioning these students into the world of work through the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Center and other public or private advocates for students with special educational needs.

18. Funding: to be completed at a later date.

19. Accountability: to be completed at a later date.

20. Transportation: to be completed at a later date.

21. Liability and Insurance: to be completed at a later date.

22. Governance Documents: to be completed at a later date.

The American Experience (A closing vignette): Ernest moves to his first class, "The American Experience", a daily, 90 minute course taught by Mr. Hampton that's broken up into four nine week units. The class has a strong focus on history, though the course also includes a good mix of literature, art, music, economics, sociology, political science, and statistics.

A number of "essential questions" are returned to time and again, through discussions, tests, quizzes, and other assignments:

- *How has race, class, gender, and ethnicity made a difference, and how can we solve problems of prejudice and discrimination?*
- *How have we done as "one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all", and what can we do to come closer to this ideal?*
- *Who's been, is, and should be in charge, and what role are you going to play as a citizen?*
- *Are we becoming more or less a democracy, and what are you going to do about it?*
- *Is it any of our business, and what will you do about it?*
- *"E pluribus unum": myth, dream, reality, possibility, responsibility?*
- *Do the ends justified the means?*
- *Is it getting better?*
- *What really happened?*
- *Who were the real good guys/gals and the real bad guys/gals?*
- *How is the American experience different?*
- *What fifteen Americans have made the greatest contributions to America's well-being?*
- *What are the five most important events in American history?*
- *What are the five greatest American works (of literature, art, music...)?*
- *Why do we behave as we do?*
- *What amendments should we make to the United States Constitution, if any?*

The class includes large group investigations that usually last about two weeks, and individual and small group investigations, that typically last another two or three weeks. The last month of the class is devoted entirely to students' final exhibitions.

The class has just finished two weeks of large group work, reading and/or studying various texts, primary source documents, case studies, works of art, music, pieces of literature, and other generative works from 1905 through 1925. Time and again, Mr. Hampton kept pushing the students to critically analyze the works, referring them back to the school's "Inquiry Questions" which are posted on the wall in every classroom in the school:

- What's the main idea/conclusion?*
- Whose idea/conclusion is it? Is (s)he reliable? Can you prove it?*
- Are there other perspectives? What are they? How do you find out about them?*
- Which perspective is most accurate? Why? How can you prove it?*
- What do you think? What's your opinion?*
- What questions remain?*

The students have also heard from two guest presenters from a local college, and watched some documentary films about the era. Finally, Mr. Hampton has spent considerable time focusing on some skills of particular importance to the class, each of which is contained in the school's "Common Core", also posted in every classroom. Mr. Hampton spent two days working on research techniques with the students and showing them how to better employ the data-bases the computer can access. He also spent another two days working on oral presentation techniques, using videotapes of students from previous years' classes to illustrate his points.

The next three weeks will be devoted to conducting individual and small group investigations of this same era. The class has been broken into teams, with each team investigating the questions, "Has race, ethnicity, or gender make a difference?" and/or "Is this one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all?" One group of students is studying the experiences of women during this era, another is focusing on the experiences of Native Americans and Asian immigrants, another on European immigrants to New York City, another on children and laborers, and Ernest's group is focusing on the African-American experience during this period of time.

Six students are working in Ernest's group, and together they're responsible for presenting their exhibitions (for critical review by the other students and the teacher) on one day during the final week of the unit. It's also their group's turn to take their show on the road and present their exhibitions to students in the local elementary school, as well as the folks at the Senior House.

The six students have been talking about what they're going to do during meetings over the past three weeks, as they've been engaged in large group work. They have two weeks to make their final decisions and prepare their presentations, each of which will last about fifteen minutes. These presentations will be supplemented by other works they'll hand in for credit, and share

with the other students. All of the students are responsible for all of this work as part of their course assignments.

Ernest's group takes two days, working on and off with Mr. Hampton, to decide what their exhibitions will be (each of which will include a position paper). They start with a general brainstorming session built on the work of the past few weeks. This process helps some of the students come up with ideas, while others need to refer to the "Possible Exhibitions" sheets Mr. Hampton has distributed. By the close of the day, Malik and Sean have decided to present a debate between W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington and submit a position paper highlighting their perspectives on the different positions taken by these two giants.

Nicki's interested in the "Great Migration" of African-Americans during this period, because this is when her family moved to Chicago from Alabama. She's decided to construct and present an oral history from interviews she'll conduct with her relatives, investigating the role race played in regards to the causes and products of the migration. She'll supplement this with some demographic data to illustrate the extent of the migration, some references to particularly relevant readings included in the course bibliography, and a commentary on a collection of prints of Jacob Lawrence's works of art focused on the Great Migration.

Marlene is from Jamaica and has heard her grandfather talk about Marcus Garvey for years. Garvey has always intrigued her, though she really doesn't know that much about him. She's decided to write a critique of his Pan-African movement. Given some encouragement from Mr. Hampton, Marlene has decided to take on Garvey's persona, explain the movement as if she were Garvey appealing to folks in Harlem in the 20s, and present a summary of her impressions about his movement.

Brian was lost and couldn't think of what to do until Mr. Hampton introduced him to Richard Wright's Black Boy. Now he can't stop reading it. He's decided to finish the book, write a comparison of key incidents from his life and that of the main character, and present the class with the experiences and feelings of a young, black boy in the south in the 1920s through the voice of his character.

Finally, Ernest, who's quite an artist and film buff, has decided to try and knock off two projects he's interested in. First of all, he's going to watch and write a critique of David Griffith's seminal work, "A Birth of a Nation". He'll compare and contrast Griffith's portrait of African-Americans with John Hope Franklin's portraits from his work, From Slavery to Freedom. Ernest will present stills from the movie to illustrate his comparisons in his presentation to the class. Secondly, he's going to try and get permission from Mr. Williams, the principal, to paint a small mural in the cafeteria depicting a scene that represents the life of urban African-Americans from the 20s. Whether or not he gets permission, he'll present a black and white sketch of the mural to the class as part of his presentation.

Now that their decisions have been made, each of the students in Ernest's group is beginning to work on their research, using the collections of works in the room, others they've picked up in the library or brought from home, or others they've accessed through the computer data-base. Mr. Hampton moves around the room working with the students. He coaches the students on

their work, helps them access information, read and understand it, or assists them in constructing their presentations.

A number of students come and go from the class to the school's library down the hall. In class, in the library, in the hallways, and even in the cafeteria at lunch, students continually discuss their work with one another and use one another as resources.

Though all of the students are intensely engaged in their work, they're also filled with anxiety as they consider the deadlines they face over the coming weeks. Though each student has a comfortable familiarity with the research, construction, and presentation process given all the work Mr. Hampton has put into teaching these skills, they also know they'll need plenty of help from their teacher and peers in the weeks to come. It's going to be an interesting few weeks.

